Purulia pump storage projects in West Bengal

1670. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether NHPC had agreed to participate in building up of Purulia pump storage project in West Bengal; and

(b) if so, the present status of participation of NHPC in the above project ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government of West Bengal (GoWB) for incorporating a Joint Venture Company (JVC) named National Pumped Storage Development Corporation Ltd. to undertake execution, operation and transmission of the Purulia Pumped Storage Scheme having an installed capacity of 900 MW. The JVC will have an authorized share capital of Rs. 600 crores to be contributed by NHPC and GoWB in the ratio of 67:33.

Ministry of Power is in the process of obtain g the approval of the Government of India for formation of the above JVC and for investment approval for implementation of the project at an estimated cost of Rs. 3129.44 crores (at November, 2003 price level) including Interest During Construction of Rs. 454.68 crores along with the associated transmission system.

Desert area in Gujarat

1671. SHRI LALITBHAI MEHTA:
SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA:

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) how much was desert area in square kilometres in Gujarat at the time of formation of a seperate State of Gujarat in 1960;

(b) whether it is a fact that deserts are fast progressing in the areas of North Gujarat and Kutch rendering agricultural land useless;

(c) whether it is also a fact that at present desert in Gujarat is estimated at 50,368 square kilometers; and

(d) how much land area is affected by salinity ingress in coastal areas of Gujarat, rendering agricultural land useless ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ANNASAHEB M.K. PATIL): (a) and (b) Desertification is a land degradation process due to extreme climatic conditions, inappropriate management practices and socio-economic conditions, Studies conducted by Department of Space indicate the process of desertification in pockets of some States including Gujarat.

(c) A High Level Technical Committee in 1994-95, identified 55,424 square kilometers as arid area coverage in Gujarat for control of desertification under Desert Development Programme.

(d) According to Wastelands Atlas of India prepared by National Remote Sensing Agency Department of Space, the total extent of Saline area in Gujarat is 7637.34 square kilometers that also comprises coastal areas with ingress/inundation of seawater.

Projects in Rajasthan under Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission

1672. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of projects taken up in the state of Rajasthan under the Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission for the year 2003-2004;

(b) the amount of funds allocated to the state under this scheme and the amount of funds transferred and utilized by the State till date;

(c) the present status of work done on these projects so far; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government for early or timely completion of these projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ANNASAHEB M.K. PATIL): (a) to (b) Rural Drinking Water Supply is a State subject, Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission under Department of Drinking Water Supply, Government of India extends financial assistance to the States to supplement their efforts of taking up rural drinking water supply schemes under a Centrally Sponsored Scheme namely Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP). Powers to plan, sanction, implement and execute individual rural drinking water supply schemes vest with State Governments. The